

guzzling manufacturing processes to clean, energy-efficient ones.

An example of seemingly mundane but significant environmental innovation comes from Micell Technologies, a start-up firm based in North Carolina, in the heart of the famed Research Triangle.

Formed in 1995 by three scientists—Joseph DeSimone, Timothy Romack and James McClain—Micell employs just 26 people. This small team is on the verge of solving one of this nation's most pervasive environmental problems.

Today, most dry cleaners rely on toxic solvents, such as perchloroethylene, or PERC, which can contaminate ground water and may cause cancer in humans after long-term exposure. While liquid carbon dioxide has long been seen as an environmentally positive alternative, it has not fared well in the marketplace because it simply cannot clean garments to acceptable standards by itself.

Led by DeSimone, a soft-spoken chemistry professor who co-invented the process with his students, scientists at UNC-Chapel Hill, developed new detergents that dissolve in liquid CO₂.

Not only is the toxic substance PERC removed from the dry cleaning equation, but Micell's two new cleaning systems, Micare and Miclean, separate and recover the CO₂ and detergents they use. Those waste products can then be recycled—an important factor in preventing run-off pollution from reaching sensitive waterways.

Just as important, Micell's innovation also will play a major role in protecting the health of tens of thousands of employees in America's dry cleaning industry—and quite likely millions of their customers as well.

The firm's accomplishment caught the eye of R&D Magazine, which named it a winner of its annual R&D 100 Awards, long regarded as the "Oscars of Invention."

Thus, a humble dry cleaner joins the fax machines, antilock brakes, and the ubiquitous ATM created by far larger corporations as a leader in cutting-edge technology.

Micell's experience shows that academic research and small company entrepreneurship may be the fastest—and greenest—path to the marketplace.

Congress should speed the discovery process by establishing new R&D tax credits and low-interest loans to encourage small businesses and universities to expand research activities.

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees recently pledged to double funding for the National Institutes of Health over five years—for starters—increasing NIH funding by \$2 billion this year. Experts in the medical community believe the funding increase will pay huge public health dividends.

Similarly, significant increases in federal funding that supports research for new environmental technologies also will produce big benefits for Americans—less pollution-driven disease, a greener planet and new industries that create jobs and enhance prosperity.

Continuing technological innovation is the key to America's economic and environmental health as it enters the 21st century. Congress should move quickly to bolster R&D and tax incentives in this key area. The time to act is now, while the U.S. still enjoys global economic dominance.●

RECOGNITION FOR RID-REMOVE INTOXICATED DRIVERS

● Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, 1998 marks the 20th anniversary of RID-Remove Intoxicated Drivers. Formed in 1978 by Doris Aiken in New York, the

organization has focused its efforts on educating the public on the impact of abusive alcohol use, offering support for the victims of drunk drivers and advocating for stricter laws on DWI.

RID has lobbied for the enactment of laws that will eliminate plea bargains for repeat offenders and funds for anti-DWI enforcement. With all their hard work, RID is able to claim credit for high safety ratings experienced in New York State. RID has also advocated for the lowering of the blood alcohol content from .1% to .08% as well as enhanced penalties for drunk drivers whose passengers are minors.

The National Highway Traffic Safety recognized the accomplishments of RID and awarded them the 1998 Public Service Award for their effective campaign to deter drunk driving. Their efforts contributed to New York being selected as having one of the safest records against drunk driving in the Nation for the fifth year.

In 1996, over 17,000 people died in drunk driving accidents, accounting for 41% of the total traffic fatalities of that year. While there was a 29% reduction from the alcohol related fatalities in 1986, it is still high—17,126 people too high. The senseless death of these individuals, the pain and anguish experienced by the family and friends and the hundreds of thousands who were injured can never truly be expressed through statistics. RID's accomplishments are for these victims and for potential victims of alcohol-related accidents.

I would like to add my congratulations to the many that RID has already received—on being recognized for their achievements in curbing drunk driving and on their 20 years of public service.●

COMMENDING THE BAY COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTER

● Mr. ABRAHAM Mr. President, I rise today to recognize an important event in my home state of Michigan. In conjunction with National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Bay County Women's Center has planned a Candlelight Vigil and Speakout. The vigil recognizes survivors, family members, and those who have lost their lives to domestic violence, in addition to educating the community about the resources available to the victims of domestic violence.

The Bay County Women's Center reaches out to survivors of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. It provides a safe, supportive, non-judgmental environment for survivors to make decisions about their lives and families. In addition to offering extensive counseling, the Center goes so far as to assist with job search skills, housing options, and child care services.

The Vigil and Speakout draw attention to a problem that is all too common in hopes that we can work together toward a solution. It will join citizens, groups of professionals, and

community leaders in an effort to stress to the Bay community that violence is inexcusable and will not be tolerated. Because the tragedy of domestic violence affects far too many American families, I commend the tireless work of the Bay County Women's Center in helping reverse domestic violence statistics and assist the victims of violence. The Center is truly an invaluable asset to Michigan's families.●

RECOGNITION OF PHILIP AND MARGE ODEEN

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Philip and Marge Odeen of Virginia. These two natives of Yankton, South Dakota have been selected by the Northern Virginia Community Foundation to receive the 1998 Northern Virginia Community Founder's Award. The Founder's Award is presented each year to those citizens who have consistently demonstrated a commitment to both civic and humanitarian concerns, while making a substantial contribution to improving the quality of life in Northern Virginia. The Founder's Award is a tribute to the Odeens' leadership in all of these areas.

From the time they moved east in 1960, the Odeens made an immediate impact in the areas of commerce, public affairs, the arts, and community improvement. Phil distinguished himself in the public sector at the National Security Council, later as a co-founder of the World Affairs Council, and most recently in his work with BDM International and TRW. Marge's endeavors on behalf of Northern Virginia Community College and the Women's Center have also been noted for their success.

Throughout their professional careers Phil and Marge have always found a way to donate time and effort to worthy causes such as the Salvation Army, Childhelp USA, the Heart Association, and the Wolf Trap Foundation. They have given freely to non-profit organizations in terms of time and money, have consistently taken the lead in getting others involved, and most importantly have positively affected the lives of numerous men, women, and children in the Washington area.

I would like to commend the Odeens for their numerous contributions to the Northern Virginia Community; their community leadership serves as a model for the citizens of both Virginia and South Dakota to emulate.●

THE CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION ACT OF 1998

● Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I am pleased with the passage by UC of the bipartisan substitute amendment to HR 2616, the Charter School Expansion Act. Senator LIEBERMAN and I introduced this bill last November to help further expand the charter school movement which is so successfully providing new educational opportunities